

FUNERAL CARES ASSUMED.

**BUT FEW POS. VAL THIEVES EVER EN-
CAPED FINAL DETECTION.**

Sometimes It Takes Months to Capture Them and Sometimes Years—A Thief Caught by Means of Mucilage—Two Methods Used to Detect Post Office Thieves.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3.—"Post Office thieves

may work undetected for months, perhaps years, but they are sure to be entrapped and punished in the end," said an old detective of the Post Office Department. "And I may add," he continued, "that no thief is harder to catch than the one who robs Uncle Sam's mails. Their methods are ingenious, the plunder is easily hidden or destroyed and their rascality

well masked by the honesty and integrity of associates."

Post Office thieves are not asleep. And every day, innumerable letters and other articles are stolen almost daily and an army of shrewd inspectors are on the alert. Possibly the proof of guilt must be in the possession of an inspector before an arrest is made. In almost every instance arrest means conviction. A Post Office inspector who "lets" a thief go will be being shadowed. Even when not under suspicion of theft he may be watched outside of business hours to see if he is spending more money than his salary will permit and if he is gambling with a fast gang. It sometimes happens that a man is suspected of being a thief, but not a man a thief and the accused is turned loose with a verdict of "not guilty" as his certificate of honesty, but that man is not wanted by the Post Office Department any more.

From one point of view it is wonderful that there are any Post Office clerks, for the most part, for clerks who handle the mail first and last, for great temptations constantly rise as they handle the millions of valuable parcels. It is known that these clerks soon learn to tell by the very touch of a letter whether it contains money. If it does, they grow a red in the face for the dishonest clerk to slip letters into his pocket and open them in the privacy of his room. That the cases of dishonesty are comparatively few is a high tribute to the moral qualities of Post Office clerks.

Years ago, resumed the inspector, as recounted by the Post Office inspector to him by ex-Inspectors Booth and Whiteheads, "on one of the old star routes out in New Mexico, hundreds of letters containing money, drafts, checks and other valuables were stolen. At first letters and all disappeared, but the thieves, growing crafty, began to leave some letters, stole the contents, revealing the letters and sending them on. As letters pass through, the hands of many clerks it is always difficult to locate the thief. Months of faithful work

"Finally there was a happy solution of the trouble. One of the Inspectors procured a quantity of different kinds of drugs and sent other Inspectors over the entire route with instructions to make a search for the drugs. As a result of this search, they were engaged to place some of one kind of the drugs in the mucilage bottle at each office, taking care to make a memorandum which would show at what office the drug had been placed. It was not long before a registered letter came. The Inspector put his lips to the seal of the envelope, tasted the mucilage, referred to his book, and at once named the

office at which the particular drug had been placed in the mailage. Then a lot of decoy registered letters went to that office, and the dishonest Postmaster secured the contents and the inspectors secured him. This, I think, was one of the cleverest pieces of work ever done by the department. The inspector who put it into execution was a fine chemist and a fine detective.

"There are but two successful ways to catch a Post Office thief—constant watching and decoy letters. With these and patience you can catch a Post Office thief in a few days, a few months and sometimes years. It is one of the most annoying and difficult lines of detective work a man ever engaged in and requires a circumspect and a very clever man."

Circumstance or detail must be overlooked. "Sometimes luck helps us out of our difficulties," the clerk said. "I was in a room from Washington things were in a fearful state in the distribution division of the office. I was alone, and I saw a fellow come in with a fellow who was making away with valuable letters. One day there came up a terrible rain storm, and I had such a happy thought to the inspector, 'I'll make a hole in the ceiling and throw the lot and throw it on the overhead plastering just over the distributors. Naturally a leak will develop, and the inspector will come into the confidene of the inspector, was sent into the loft to make an investigation. Accidentally, I saw the fellow come through the wet plastering, leaving a hole.'"

"Of course, to repair this it would have been necessary to remove the ceiling of the room, and, as this was not done, the clerk went ahead with their work, while the inspector was away. The fellow who had come from the supposed accidentally made hole. Finally he was rewarded by seeing one of the inspectors come down the stairs and throw into his pocket. The inspector scolded the

fellows and found the letters in his pocket. Seeing he was caught dead to rights, the man confessed everything. In court he attempted no defence, save to say that he had been designing to furnish the fugitive with his wings severed, clipped, and stole away with them.

"A German named Namath gave the inspectors a world of trouble in the same city. Thousands of letters were missed, and goodness only knows how much money stolen. It was a case which puzzled the department, and after weeks of the closest investigation it was decided that the crooked work was not done

palp was begun, and Namath was arrested while stealing loiters from one of the street boxes. He did not have a key, but used a wire to get into the box. His operation was confined to boxes, the business of the palps, and he admitted that he had stolen not less than 10,000 letters before he was caught. He also admitted that he had not ascertained, but he must have secured a snug sum. His confession sent him to the penitentiary for a long term.

It is well to add about the fact that few arrests have been made here in Warhington. There's a powerful array of employees here, but they seldom go wrong, and yet inspectors are here to see that they do not. The inspectors. This is often spoken of by the inspectors.

"Now, if we had someone to look after the

"It happened in this way: His daughter was made Postmistress at a town in Georgia, and it was before she got to work, and went down there, of course, he had the run of the office and by and by the cash came up several hundred dollars short. The father said to the daughter, 'What's gone wrong?' It always struck me that if that man would steal from his daughter's office he must have been guilty of crooked work while he was inspector.

A WORLD CAPITAL, THIS,
And Broadway but a Busy Stretch of a Path
Running Round the Earth.

"It is quite a journey, the trip across the continent," said a New Yorker, and even the American, accustomed as he is to great distances, and to everything on a big scale, thinks in his heart, the first time he makes it, that this is a big country. But I venture to say that we shall presently discover that we have been deceived, and that feeling will come to us together with the revelation that we are no citizens of the world, indeed, when we

"The Eastern man who travels for days and night before he comes to the confines of his own country, cannot fail to be impressed with the power of the sea. He is first of all, instead of standing at San Francisco he kept on for another day, and then he landed on a raft floating on the Pacific Ocean, the land belonging to his own country. And then he sailed on for days till he came to lands in one island in the sea, but, ocean bound though they are, considerable territories over which he could walk. He found that the world was not all sea, but on his own soil still, and New York seemed no longer simply a great city with a harbor, but a great city with a harbor, and the chief city of a great country—it seems now like a small application of the sea."

"But not entirely so. We want something

more. There is a lonesome stretch around the other half of the world, from the Philippines on, where we have no place to set our foot. But we shall find places there, no doubt, in the course of time. It's the nature of things that we should, and when that time comes the citizen of this town where I live, Broadway, will be the first to go. It's no longer merely part of a local road that runs a few thousand miles and stops, but the busy section of a line that goes round the world.

**BUT FEW PORTAL THIEVES EVER ES-
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Sometimes It Takes Months to Capture

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3.—"Post Office thieves may work undetected for months, perhaps years, but they are sure to be entrapped and punished in the end," said an old detective of the Post Office Department. "And I may add," he continued, "that no thief is harder to catch than the one who robs Uncle Sam's mails. Their methods are ingenious, the plunder is easily hidden or destroyed and their rascality is well masked by the honesty and integrity of associates."

Post Office thieves are not arrested every day, although valuable letters and packages are stolen every day. Detectives and inspectors must be on the alert. Possibly a proof of guilt must be in the possession of an inspector before an arrest is made. In almost every instance arrest means conviction. A Post Office employee never knows when he is being shadowed. Even when not under suspicion of theft he may be watched outside of business hours. If he is caught, he will lose his salary, will permit and if he is going along with a fast gang. It sometimes happens as that an inspector may not be able to prove a man a thief and the accused is turned loose with a verdict of "not guilty" as his certificate of honesty, but that man is not wanted by the Post Office Department any more.

From one end of the country to the other there are so few thieves among the many thousand clerks who handle the mail first and last, for great temptations constantly rise as they handle the millions of valuable parcels.

It is known that these clerks soon learn to tell by the very touch of a letter whether it contains money. If so inclined, it would be an easy matter for the dishonest clerk to slip

letters into his pocket and open them in the privacy of his room. That the cases of dishonesty are comparatively few is a high tribute to the moral qualities of Post Office clerks.

"Years ago," resumed the Inspector, as he refilled a beautiful pipe presented to him by ex-Inspectors Booth and Whitesides, "on one of the old star routes out in New Mexico, hundreds of letters containing money, drafts, checks and other valuables were stolen. At first letters and all disappeared, but the thieves changed their mode of operation and simply stole the contents, resealing the letters and sending them on. As letters pass through

"Finally there was a happy solution of the trouble. One of the inspectors procured a quantity of different kinds of drugs and sent other inspectors over the entire route with instructions to make a tour of book investigations, and while thus engaged to place some of one kind of the drugs in the mudlugs, one at each office, telling the men to make a mistake at each office, and to make the mudlugs look as if they had been there. The inspectors were to show at what office the drug had been placed. It was not long before a registered letter came through with the money gone. The inspector put his lips to the seal of the envelope, tasted the mudlugs, referred to his book, and at once named the office at which the particular drug had been placed in the mudlugs. Then a lot of decoy registered letters went to that office, and the thieves were detected and arrested."

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necessary to do the work from the distribution room, and, as this was not done, the clerks were forced to look down at their every movement. Finally he saw a stewardess literally melt one of the oldest employees in the office slipping letters into her pocket. He followed her to the lavatory, fellow and found the letters in his pocket. Seeing he was caught dead to rights, the man, instead of denying the charges, offered no defence, save to say that he had been doing in the future, had had his wings severed.

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palp was begun, and Namath was arrested while stealing loiters from one of the street boxes. He did not have a key, but used a wire to get into the box. His operation was confined to boxes, the business of the palps, and he admitted that he had stolen not less than 10,000 letters before he was caught. He also admitted that he had not ascertained, but he must have secured a snug sum. His confession sent him to the penitentiary for a long term.

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American, accustomed as he is to great distances, and to everything on a big scale, thinks in his heart, the first time he makes it, that this is a big country. But I venture to say that we shall presently discover that what we have been thinking and feeling will turn out to be all too true; together with the realization that we are now citizens of the world, indeed, whelp we come to see our flag floating over distant shores.

"For Eastern men who travel for days at night and never before he comes to the confines of one country cannot fail to be impressed by the fact that they are passing through a land instead of stopping at San Francisco he kept on going until he reached the Pacific Ocean, and found his flag flying on the Hawaiian Islands, thus belonging to his own country. And then on reaching the East Indies he found his flag waving on islands in the sea, but ocean bound though they are, considerable territories over which his country has jurisdiction. He then finds his flag flying on the soil of New Zealand, but on his own soil still, and New York seems no longer simply a great city with a wide harbor, but a great metropolis, and the chief city of a great country—it seems now a vast empire."

But not entirely so. We want something more. There is a lonesome stretch across the continent where there are no cities or towns, where we find places, from the desert to our coast. But we shall find them, no doubt, if we go far enough westward. They are things that we should, and when that time comes the citizen of this town, when he walks down Broadway, will feel that he is standing merely a part of a local road that runs a few thousand miles and stops, but the busy sea-